



## King County

### **VETERANS AND HUMAN SERVICES LEVY 2008 STRATEGY AREA ANNUAL REPORTS**

#### **Strategy 4.5**

#### **Invest in education and employment programs for single parents exiting the criminal justice system**

#### **OBJECTIVE**

The goal of Strategy Area 4 is to strengthen families who are at risk. Strategy 4.5 is designed to invest in education and employment programs for single parents exiting the criminal justice system. It is part of a comprehensive support network that also includes the Levy investment in Activity 2.6 that assists young parents coming out of jail find housing, and Activity 4.4 that provides supportive services for these same parents.

#### **POPULATION FOCUS**

Services are targeted toward single parents who are exiting the criminal justice system and are making the transition from incarceration to stability in the community. The program focuses on parents who are actively trying to reunite with their children.

#### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This program addresses the range of service needs exhibited by single parent ex-offenders and their children. Providers identify appropriate program participants after determining that the potential participant has a realistic possibility of reuniting with their children. The provider then works with clients throughout their transition from the corrections system, through reunification and for up to one year after they are established in housing.

If it becomes clear that a program participant is unable to reunite with their children, staff works with that participant on a transition plan, linking them to another appropriate program. Services are flexible and customized to meet the specific needs of household members (adults and children) including services in the following three categories:

- **Service enhancements in transitional housing**, such as help meeting basic needs and legal obligations, linkage to health care and treatment, parenting support, links to children's services, reunification services, and domestic violence education and support
- **Education and employment programs**, such as assistance toward high school graduation or a GED, vocational training and skills enhancement, job placement, and post-placement supports
- **Permanent housing placement supports**, such as assistance in identifying permanent housing and case management support for up to one year as needed for households to maintain their stability in housing. Levy funds do not cover services to children, but providers are required to provide needed children's services with other funding sources.

#### **PROGRESS DURING 2008**

This sub-strategy was linked with Strategies 2.6 (Invest in permanent housing placement supports for single parents with children with criminal justice involvement exiting transitional housing) and 4.4 (Provide service enhancements for single parents exiting the criminal justice system living in transitional housing) and awarded a total of \$458,861 to two providers during 2008.

Agency	Veterans Funds Awarded	Human Services Funds	Total Levy Funds Awarded
YWCA		\$351,629	\$351,629
First Place		\$107,232	\$107,232
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$458,861</b>	<b>\$458,861</b>

*Note: Of this total, \$325,329 is from Strategy 4.4, \$68,072 is from 4.5, and \$65,460 is from 2.6. It includes both 2007 and 2008 funds.*

Services began in September 2008.

Approximately \$345,000 in Strategies 2.6 and 4.4 is currently out in a Request for Proposals (RFP) process along with other transitional housing funds. Levy funds will be used only for single parents with recent criminal justice involvement.

### **SERVICES PROVIDED**

This has been a challenging activity to implement. The biggest challenge stemmed from the way this project was structured in the Service Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP identified three separate strategies, each with a specified funding amount, targeted to the same population. The three strategies were conceptualized as a single comprehensive project serving single parents from before they left the corrections system, through reunification with their children, transitional housing, and up to one year once in permanent housing.

The RFP reflected that project concept and the team was able to fund two projects through the process. However these projects' budget requests did not line up with the amount of funding specified in each strategy, which left staff with balances in two strategies that were insufficient to fund an additional comprehensive project. The team has addressed this challenge in two ways. The funds remaining in Strategy 2.6 are currently out in an RFP, combined with other funding for shelter, transitional housing and rental assistance to see whether community providers propose any projects to use these funds for permanent housing placement supports for the target population. The remaining funds in Strategy 4.5 are being used as leverage in an application for additional Workforce Investment Act funds targeting this population.

An additional challenge was that the YWCA's Passage Point housing facility will not be available as early as anticipated. The YWCA has met this challenge by working to identify other housing that can be used in the meantime, and sees this as an opportunity to develop their service model with a more limited number of households prior to initiating the large Passage Point project.

Despite these challenges, during the final quarter of 2008, First Place provided 260 hours of case management and 52 hours of inreach, defined as identifying appropriate program participants before their release from incarceration. In addition, the YWCA completed the following start up activities:

- Created job descriptions and conducted hiring processes resulting in the hire of a Lead Case Manager and a Case Manager.
- Established work spaces and program design with work flow.
- Developed agreements with subcontractors for services and capacity training and inreach services.
- Created a listing of local reentry programs that might be a referral source or a source of services for future Passage Point clients, and met for more detailed discussions with at least one of them.
- Planned for children's services.
- Begin to identify property managers and landlords for housing resources.

**Numbers Served.** Contracts began in September 2008, and most activities had to do with startup (hiring staff, identifying potential families, developing agreements with other service providers etc.). YWCA did not serve clients in 2008; First Place served two families.

**Living Situation.** Of the two families served, all six members were homeless prior to the project's start.

Living Situation	
Homeless	6
Not Homeless	0

**Age.** The two families consisted of two adults and four children.

Age Group	
0 to 5	2
6 to 10	2
11 to 13	
14 to 17	
18 to 34	2
35 to 59	
60 to 74	
75 to 84	
85 and over	

**Gender.** All six people served by the program were female.

**Outcomes.** There are no outcomes yet, as families have just begun to be served.

## **SUCCESS STORY**

Jalea was rejoining society without any means to gain housing or employment or to reunite with her two children, who were in foster care. Stable housing and stable employment are two key components of being able to reunite with children who have been displaced during incarceration.

Jalea had months of work ahead of her to meet the requirements of the court system and the Department of Social and Health Services. She also had personal goals of attending classes to achieve her GED and learning how to prepare a better life for her children.

After working with First Place staff for over six months to attend all her meetings, study for her tests and gain housing, Jalea became a mother again when her 18-month-old son came home. Jalea is also close to getting her GED, another important goal.

(Note: this household was already in the program when Levy funding came to bear – but the additional case management was key in helping Jalea move forward and achieve her goals.)

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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